



The Girl Puzzle Monument at Lighthouse Park



Roosevelt Island
Operating Corporation

ROOSEVELT ISLAND NEWS

Community, Identity, Conversations & Innovations

Issue 17: August, 2023

Letter from the President

Dear Roosevelt Island Community:

The summer is winding down and there is a lot of important initiatives coming up this fall on the island. The biggest event that will affect our island in a significant way is the upcoming MTA 63rd Street Track Replacement Project which will officially begin on August 28th. I know this project is top of mind for our community and RIOC will continue to maintain constant contact with the MTA throughout its duration. Later in this newsletter we'll outline some of the bigger aspects of the project and what measures are being taken to mitigate its impact on island residents. But I do want to reiterate a few key points that I keep hearing and dispel some misinformation that's floating around. First, this project does not mean that there will be absolutely no subway travel to Manhattan and Queens. The MTA will be running a special shuttle between Manhattan and Queens that stop at Roosevelt Island approximately every 20 minutes, so although you will have to transfer once you hit either borough, you will still be able to travel off-island using the subway trains. That F-train shuttle runs from 5AM to Midnight, at which point the MTA will then be running special free Q94 shuttles from the island to 21st Street Queensbridge and Queens Plaza. Following feedback from some of our Constituent Service meetings we have also reiterated to Tram operator POMA the need to ensure seating priority for the disabled, elderly, and pregnant women is adhered to, especially while the trackwork is taking place. Signage regarding the project has gone up across the island and we will continue to send out advisories regarding the project at a regular cadence.

Speaking of signage, RIOC is currently working on several sign projects to help improve quality of life for island residents and visitors. We've begun the process of reassessing all island signage, from traffic to wayfinding signs, which we know are dated. We are also working on a brand-new anti-littering campaign which will help raise awareness about island cleanliness. The campaign will revolve around general island beautification and our AVAC system, which is often challenged by people incorrectly using it to dispose of large items. Baseball bats, hockey sticks, and steel bed frames shouldn't be finding their way into the system, but they often do, resulting in costly and time-consuming repairs. We hope our campaign, which will launch this fall, will help raise awareness about these issues and result in better AVAC utilization.

Our next RIOC sponsored island event is also fast approaching, our 18th annual "Fall for Arts", and this year's call for artists will be announced shortly. "Fall for Arts" is a truly unique Roosevelt Island experience, and I am always so blown away by the incredible work our participating artists are able to create, and the ideas and emotions that work conveys. We'll also be hosting a special September 11th remembrance ceremony the week prior to pay tribute to our brave first responders and honor the memories of those we lost on that fateful day 22 years ago. Look out for future communications on that as well.

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President & CEO Shelton Haynes and the
RIOC Executive Team



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- **The Roosevelt Island Runners Club** hosts weekly group runs every Tuesday at 7pm from Eleanor's Pier. If you enjoy running or are just looking for a fun communal activity, check them out—all paces are welcome!
- Our next **PSD Community Engagement Meeting** will be Tuesday, September 12th at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd (543 Main Street).
- Our final **2023 Summer Movie at Southpoint Park** will be "Super Pets" on August 18th. Festivities begin at 6pm and the movie itself will begin at sundown.



- **The Haki Compost Collective FSDO** (Food Scrap Drop-Off) for compost happens every Saturday from 9am to 2pm at Good Shepherd Plaza near the picnic tables. Come drop off your compostable materials and help reduce waste!
- **The Roosevelt Island Plogging Club** meets every Sunday at the big bell next to the Chapel of the Good Shepherd at 2pm to collect trash and help beautify the island. Ploggers collect about 20 to 30 pounds of litter each week and have an enjoyable time doing it. All are welcome to join!

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I also want to thank our PSD team for planning and hosting another recent event, "National Night Out" on August 1st. Building bridges between law-enforcement and the community is critically important for ensuring island safety, which continues to be a focal point for me and my team. At this past month's PSD Community Engagement Meeting, our PSD Chief Kevin Brown said something prescient: "We have a challenging mental health crisis in New York City, and some of that is trickling over to Roosevelt Island." Chief went on to discuss the many mental health crisis calls PSD officers answers every day, and steps we try to take in partnership with NYPD to address our portion of this citywide issue. We on Roosevelt Island are not immune to these mental health challenges, and unfortunately our island endured a tragic incident just two weeks ago involving a young man in crisis. While in the throes of a mental health episode, he wielded a knife against family members, and later NYPD officers, whose attempts to disarm him without further incident failed. My heart goes out to his family, who now must endure the unspeakable sadness of losing a loved one. This isn't a simple crime issue—mental health problems are much more insidious, much more difficult to identify and manage. More support and help for those with mental health needs are needed and we will continue to do what we can here at RIOC to advocate for that. We also remain committed to taking an "all of the above" approach to island safety that goes beyond simple policing, with hopes that a more holistic approach can yield better outcomes in the future.

On that difficult note, I just want to reiterate the importance of having a community that is supportive of each other and understanding of the challenges we all may be facing behind closed doors. I feel as though we have that here on Roosevelt Island, but we can always do better, all of us, when it comes to compassion and empathy.

Sincerely,

Shelton J. Haynes
President & CEO



RIOC THANKS DAEMAN DI STEFANO FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE CORPORATION

RIOC would like to thank outgoing Assistant Chief Financial Officer and Comptroller Daeman Di Stefano for all his outstanding work in service to the Corporation. "Daeman was an integral part of the Corporation from the minute he joined us, and we will miss his contributions immensely. I want to congratulate him on this next life adventure and wish him well in all his future endeavors," said RIOC President Shelton Haynes.

ISLAND-WIDE ANTI-LITTERING CAMPAIGN COMING SOON

In the coming weeks, the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation will unveil its new anti-littering campaign aimed at keeping our island clean and green! The campaign will help raise awareness about proper disposal of island litter and focus on educating people about our unique AVAC system, including best practices on how to help maintain it for future generations. Keep an eye out for further announcements on this campaign starting in the fall.

BENEFITS OF DISPOSING OF GARBAGE IN ITS PLACE

- Keep Roosevelt Island clean.
- Prevent bad odors.
- Prevent pollution or contamination.





EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Kasheen Key

Title: Youth Center Manager

Department: Roosevelt Island Youth Center

RIOC Employee Since: 2018

What did you do before joining RIOC?

Before joining RIOC I was a shift supervisor at a Transitional Living Program with at-risk teenagers. My duties included helping at-risk teens develop independent living skills such as resume writing, meal planning,

budgeting, saving income, balancing a budget, grocery shopping, obtaining a driver's license and apartments etc.

You work for the Youth Center now, but is it true you also attended the Youth Center when you were young?

Yes, I attended the Youth Center and IS/ PS 217 as a kid. The Youth Center was a fun place for us to just hang out and connect with our peers. I've had some unforgettable moments, like when I was a member of a traveling basketball team, and we played in various NYC locations. My first employment was at the Youth Center when I was 14yrs old. I was responsible for making sure participants signed in, and then later was given the opportunity to coordinate a Youth Center basketball league during the summer at Blackwell Park.

So, what brought you back to the Youth Center?

A friend of mine who works in the Grounds Department told me about some imminent retirements and possibilities in that department. Unions are weaker in the South, so I was intrigued to be a part of a Union. However, the dynamics of the company and the Youth Center shifted. My background and desire compelled me to join a team dedicated to providing excellent programming for Roosevelt Island's youth.

What do you love most about working with Roosevelt Island youth?

What I enjoy most about working with Roosevelt Island adolescents is the variety of cultures and backgrounds. The unique names, personalities, inventiveness, wit, and vitality of the Island's youth are admirable and encouraging.

The Youth Center has a lot of really great programming, what's your favorite?

With all the amazing programming available at the Youth Center, as much as I would like to say Sports Mania because of the competition, Mad Science is my clear favorite. To witness how brilliant these kids are and how focused they were throughout the Science Fair simply goes to show how much fun learning can be.

Finally, what do you love best about the island?

What I love best about the Island is the diversity of the population. It's what I adore most. I've interacted with people of many different races, including Chinese, Serbian, Japanese, African, South Korean, Ukrainian, and West Indian. I've always loved how secure Roosevelt Island is and thought it was Manhattan's best-kept secret.

OFFICER OF THE MONTH

Officer Jovy Darbouze

Officer Darbouze has been selected for the Officer of the month for July for his consistency in setting an excellent example of the community policing, which we require of all our Public Safety Officers that patrol on Roosevelt Island.

Since the completion of his bike training, officer Darbouze has patrolled the island via our PSD patrol bicycles. This has allowed him to effectively interact with the community and patrol specific areas in a quicker time frame. He has done an excellent job paying special attention to our parking and traffic conditions on Main Street, making sure all vehicles and bicyclist are obeying the traffic signs. Officer Darbouze has also made it a priority to address and correct the condition of illegally parked vehicles on the island, which is an important issue here. In addition, Office Darbouze has responded to various incidents in the month of July and has handled them in an appropriate, professional matter, whether it be requesting the necessary type of outside resources or by correcting the situation himself. He is a reliable asset to the residents of this community and takes pride in keeping the island safe.





COMMUNITY LEADERS

Vincent Pierce, Peter Yearwood, Alex Eshelman – Open Doors

First, for those unfamiliar, could you tell us a bit about the history of Open Doors? What was the driving force behind the founding in 2016?

Jennilie Brewster was a local artist and Roosevelt Islander who would volunteer at Coler and she started OPEN DOORS as a writing workshop for young men who had no recreational activities. Originally, OPEN DOORS was focused on gun violence prevention, speaking at schools, and connecting with at-risk youth. Over time, this group became the Reality Poets and grew to have more members, including women. Now, OPEN DOORS does a lot of advocacy for residents and workers of long-term-care facilities. Everyone at OPEN DOORS is an artist and we use our diverse skill sets and perspectives to do really great work.

How has the support from the community been since its founding?

The Roosevelt Island community has been extremely supportive of OPEN DOORS over the past 7 years. We've done events with a handful of other groups on the island and feel embraced by our peer organizations. During the pandemic, a handful of Roosevelt Islanders who were friends of OPEN DOORS did a lot of work to support the poets physically and emotionally.

Altogether, OPEN DOORS relies on our allies, and our foundation is built with a lot of love and friendship.

Your programming is so unique and diverse, could you tell us about it?

We operate on a semesterly schedule, going on break over the summer and holiday seasons. Our programming is in person and virtual and includes a mix of regularly occurring activities and events, and we're always working on larger projects behind the scenes. "Freestyle Fridays" which we host virtually every Friday at 2pm are public spaces that often feature artists and activists as guest speakers. They're also where we get together each week and share poetry. Also virtual, we host webinars and calls to connect with others advocating for long-term-care to build relationships and to connect with residents in other facilities doing similar work. We just finished hosting a series of Artist Salons across the island, which you can learn about on our website, and look forward to hosting more events in the future. Much of our programming over the next year will be related to the impact campaign for our upcoming film, and these activities will be intended to help the film reach a broader audience.

Speaking of your upcoming film, "Fire Through Dry Grass", what can you tell us about that?

Co-Directed by Reality Poet, Andres Molina and Alexis Neophytides, Fire Through Dry Grass uncovers in real-time the devastation experienced by residents of a New York City nursing home during the coronavirus pandemic.

It's our biggest project to date and we've been working on it for three years! Shot by its protagonists, FIRE is unlike any other film, and shows the never-before-seen perspective of nursing home residents on lockdown during the pandemic.

You also have some other upcoming projects in the pipeline, including a poetry book. We know there will be a call for artists soon, do you want to tell us a bit more about that?

Wheeling and Healing 2: Holding the Mic in the Middle of the Storm will be the follow up to our 2019 poetry anthology. The submissions we select to be included will focus on words of empowerment and perseverance as we aspire to move from surviving to thriving in a post pandemic world. All are welcome to submit via a Google form on our website, which also lists prompts, and can reach out to me with any questions.

Could you also tell us a bit more about the Nursing Home Lives Matter movement and the Open Doors "Bill of Rights" on your website (opendoorsnyc.org)?

NHLM is a movement founded by our Director, Vincent Pierce, about one year after the start of the pandemic. NHLM fights for a healthcare system that protects, respects and cares for all those living and working in long-term care, especially Black and brown people. Our bill of rights is a list of demands that we call for all facilities to meet, and you can sign virtually to support this list at our NHLM webpage.

Finally, if folks in the community want to reach out or get involved with Open Doors, how could they help?

First, they should be on the lookout for the National release of "Fire Through Dry Grass"! We air on PBS/POV at 10pm EST October 30th. They can also visit the "Get Involved" tab at the bottom of our website to sign up for our newsletter. We're often hosting events or doing something on the island so be on the lookout for our fliers, but our newsletter is the most direct way to stay connected. Finally, we welcome donations, and people can access our donations page from our website www.opendoorsnyc.org.



SMALL BUSINESS FOCUS

Granny Annie's Bar & Kitchen

Business Owner: Paul McDaid

Address: 425 Main Street

Opened in: 2020

Tell us a little about your background.

I'm from a big family of seven Born in County Donegal, Ireland. I came to New York City in 1987 where I started in construction, from there I went to work at Central Park in the hospitality/ tourism industry and am still involved in it to this day. I've always been drawn to hospitality and interacting with people from all over the world.

What made you decide to open Granny Annie's Bar and Kitchen on Roosevelt Island?

As I was looking for a new venture and opportunity, I met a couple who were residents of Roosevelt Island. I went on to tell them that I often cycle there and have a pint at the bar by the Tram. They proceeded to tell me it was recently closed. I spoke to my partners Stevie and Dymna about the space. The second they saw the island, the views, the space, everyone was excited about the project.

Tell us a little about what you serve.

Contemporary American food with traditional Irish favorites.

If someone were visiting Granny Annie's for the first time, what would you suggest they try?

Everything from our potato leek soup and appetizers like our huge buffalo wings and chicken quesadillas, to burgers and our Southern Fried Chicken sandwich with coleslaw. Irish standards like Shepherds and Chicken Pot Pie, Irish Bangers with Mash and we can't forget about our amazing pan seared Atlantic Salmon or our New York Strip cooked perfectly.

It's not just the food, you also host a lot of fun events at Granny Annie's. Can you tell us about the trivia nights and shows?

We love hosting events, including our Wednesday Trivia with different themes each week and prizes. We encourage feedback from our guests to pick future trivia themes. Fridays we are lucky to have our resident and Island favorite musician Derek Dempsey, who plays hits from the 60's to present day favorites. Saturdays we revolve through local favorite musicians like Adam Travis, Tom Shader, and Taylor Bennet from 7-10pm. We also host events from The Roosevelt Island Runners Club every Tuesday, Tennis and Racquet Club also on Fridays, and events for the Roosevelt Islands yearly Film Festival. Also, anytime Main Street Theatre needs a cast party, we've got them covered.

You opened in 2020, a difficult year for a lot of businesses. What were the challenges like for you and how has the response been from the community?

We had planned to open in May 2020. Then Covid hit and all construction was halted from March until July which pushed our opening to September, with outdoor eating and drinking only. Great challenges arose. Everything from getting materials, equipment, working with suppliers—it was difficult. Staffing was almost impossible at first and has just recently come back to something normal. Not to mention a second close later that year from December to mid-February. From the beginning, our Roosevelt Island friends and family

have showed us nothing but love and support. We couldn't have done it without them.

Finally, what makes Roosevelt Island so special to you?

The whole environment is so special. Where else can you live in New York City and feel like you've taken a step outside the chaos? The people are especially great. From the longtime resident who can tell you everything that ever happened here, to the parade of strollers on the weekends with young families and children playing in the grass in front of the restaurant. All special.

Visit online at grannyanniesnyc.com



HAPPENING AROUND ROOSEVELT ISLAND

ROOSEVELT ISLAND CELEBRATES “CITY OF WATER DAY”

On Saturday, July 15th FDR Four Freedoms State Park celebrated “City of Water Day” in partnership with The New York Public Library and iDig2Learn on Roosevelt Island. City of Water day is an annual celebration started by the Waterfront Alliance and the New York/ New Jersey Hudson Estuary Program (NY/NJ HEP). This year’s theme was resilience in the face of climate change. Attendees got to participate in the Aqueduct Challenge with NYCH2O to learn how water flows from mountains to New York City (our water comes from the Pepacton Reservoir about 100 miles north of the city). Visitors to the park also enjoyed the premiere performance of “Water is Life,” an interpretive dance created for iDig2Learn to celebrate the day by interdisciplinary artist Chris Bisram. What’s more, iDig2Learn shared news about the Billion Oyster Project that has restored 15 reef sites around NYC, tapping the power of oysters to both filter our waters to make them cleaner and create powerful living shores that reduce wave size and protect coastlines during storm surge flooding. A nice side effect is that with cleaner waters, Menhaden (Bunker) fish are back and lately dolphins and even whales have been spotted in the East River! We can do our part to conserve precious water by turning off facets when we brush our teeth or shave and reporting dripping faucets.



HAPPENING AROUND ROOSEVELT ISLAND

“NATIONAL NIGHT OUT” CELEBRATED AT GOOD SHEPHERD PLAZA

On Tuesday, August 1st the Public Safety Department hosted its annual “National Night Out” event at Good Shepherd Plaza. National Night Out is a community building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships in hopes of enhancing the relationship between members of law-enforcement and the neighborhoods they serve. PSD was joined by members of the Red Cross and other community groups focusing on safety and preparedness across the island, in addition to hundreds of island residents who enjoyed free hot dogs, ice cream, and PSD sponsored giveaways!



SUMMER MOVIE SERIES AT SOUTHPPOINT PARK

The Friday forecasts have not worked out in our favor this summer, but we did manage to kick-off our Summer Movie Series at Southpoint Park (several weeks late) with the movie “Minions: The Rise of Gru” on Friday July 28th. Residents were able to set-up their lawn chairs and blankets starting at 6pm, with food trucks also invited to enhance the festivities. All films begin at sundown—our final scheduled movie event this year will be “Super Pets” on August 18th.



MAJOR CHANGES TO F-TRAIN SERVICE STARTING IN AUGUST

The MTA will be starting its project to replace track along the 63rd St corridor that carries the F line between Manhattan and Queens via Roosevelt Island at the end of August. Though the project officially starts on Monday August 28th, subway service for Roosevelt Island will be affected in the weekends leading up to that date.

Per the MTA, below is a timeline of important dates with the accompanying subway service changes:

Aug. 18-21

- There will be no Queens Bound F-Train Service from 9:45 PM Friday 8/18 to 5:00 AM Monday 8/21
- RIOC will be providing a free weekend (8/19-8/20) Manhattan Tram Shuttle starting Saturday 8/19 at 3 PM. The shuttle will depart hourly from the Tramway, making all northbound local stops to Capobianco Field (Opposite PS/IS 217). Return Red Bus service from Manhattan to Roosevelt Island will start at 3:30 PM. This bus will depart on the half hour from the Southwest side of 2nd Avenue, between 58th & 59th Street, and will make all southbound local bus stops (starting with 591 Main Street) to the Tram. The last trip will depart from the Roosevelt Island Tramway at 7:00 PM. The last trip will depart Manhattan at 7:30 PM.

Aug. 25-28

- **There will be no F train service in both directions on Roosevelt Island from 9:45 PM Friday 8/25 – 5 AM Monday 8/28.**
- F trains will run via 53 St (E) line.
- **Free MTA shuttle buses will operate between Roosevelt Island and Queens Plaza, also stopping at 21 St-Queensbridge and making Q102 stops on the Island.**
- **RIOC will be providing a free weekend (8/26-8/27) Manhattan Tram Shuttle starting Saturday 8/26 at 3 PM.** The shuttle will depart hourly from the Tramway, making all northbound local stops to Capobianco Field (Opposite PS/IS 217). Return Red Bus service from Manhattan to Roosevelt Island will start at 3:30 PM. This bus will depart on the half hour from the Southwest side of 2nd Avenue, between 58th & 59th Street, and will make all southbound local bus stops (starting with 591 Main Street) to the Tram. The last trip will depart from the Roosevelt Island Tramway at 7:00 PM. The last trip will depart Manhattan at 7:30 PM.

Aug. 28-Early 2024

- Beginning at 5AM on Monday, August 28th, F-trains will run via 53 St line (E) line in both directions between 47-50 Sts-Rockefeller Center and Jackson Hts-Roosevelt Av.
- **Beginning at 5AM on Monday, August 28th, F SHUTTLE trains will operate between Manhattan and Queens:**
 - > Serving Lexington Av/63 St, **Roosevelt Island**, and 21 St-Queensbridge stations.
 - > Service will be on a limited frequency due to this being a single-track operation. **Customers should expect the shuttle train to operate approximately every 20 minutes.**
 - > The shuttle train will operate **7 days a week between 5AM-11:59PM** (except on limited occasions when both tracks need to be taken out of service temporarily - MTA will provide advance information when they are scheduled).
 - > **A Q95 free shuttle bus** will provide eastern connections from 21 St-Queensbridge to/from Queens Plaza, where customers can connect to EFR trains. **Free transfers will also be available to the N and 7 at the nearby Queensboro Plaza station.**
- **Overnights (12AM-5AM)**, when the shuttle train is suspended, the MTA will provide a free Q94 shuttle bus connecting Roosevelt Island, 21 St-Queensbridge, and Queens Plaza.

The MTA has launched a dedicated webpage for the project that will be regularly updated, which you can visit here:

<https://new.mta.info/63stline>.



UPDATES FROM RIOC

NEWLY UPGRADED ISLAND-WIDE CAMERA SYSTEM NOW LIVE



This past July, RIOC President & CEO Shelton Haynes announced the completion of upgrades to the island-wide security camera system, a major initiative that was part of the recently unveiled 10-Point Public Safety Plan for Roosevelt Island. The \$50,000+ upgrades to the camera system include the ability in the future to fully integrate Roosevelt Island's camera system with the FBI and New York Police Department's, which will improve law-enforcement's ability to respond to reported crime and investigate criminal acts. The new system also includes more island cameras, cloud-based video monitoring, enhanced license plate recognition, automatic camera failover

to guard against power issues, video and security analytics, and hardened cybersecurity software to ensure no intruders can access the system.

"When we unveiled the 10-Point Public Safety Plan in May we knew some of our initiatives would take time, especially the big ones like upgrading our camera system. I am very pleased to see this project, which I think will be a real game-changer for island safety, come together so quickly," said Haynes. "These upgrades will do three very important things: they'll help law-enforcement exponentially when responding to and investigating crime; they'll serve as a strong deterrent for crime on the island; and, importantly, they'll make everyone living on the island feel safer within the community. I want to thank PSD and the RIOC IT Department for their important work here, in addition to the NYPD for their cooperation on this initiative."

RIOC worked with Genetec, a leading video management system and access control system platform, on this new system.



President Haynes Named to City & State's Manhattan Power 100

Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation President and CEO Shelton Haynes was named one of Manhattan's 100 most influential people by City & State, one of the premiere news organizations covering politics and government in the Empire State. The publication's annual Manhattan Power 100 "recognizes the borough's most politically influential people in government, business, education, advocacy and nonprofits."

"I am deeply humbled by my inclusion in City & State's Manhattan Power 100, but this recognition belongs to all of Roosevelt Island, its residents, and the entire operating corporation," said Haynes. "What we are doing here has not gone unnoticed beyond our shores. We maintain a beautiful, clean, safe island that's enjoyed by 12,000 residents and countless thousands of visitors from all over the world. We've had some tremendous capital project wins, including the state-of-the-art Sportspark facility, our new pickleball courts, and the beautiful restoration work done to Blackwell House and our historic lighthouse. And we are continuing to strengthen neighborhood ties, through engagement events and supporting our robust network of community groups. The world is watching, and I'm excited for what's still to come!"



PSD JULY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEETING HIGHLIGHTS ISLAND PROGRESS

The RIOC Public Safety Department hosted its monthly Community Engagement Meeting on July 25th where island residents were able to hear directly from PSD leadership about island safety. During the meeting, PSD Chief Kevin Brown gave the updated monthly crime statistics for the island and discussed in detail the progress being made on President Haynes' 10-Point Public Safety Plan.

MEET THE NEW RIOC BOARD MEMBERS

Three new Members have joined the Roosevelt Island Board of Directors in recent weeks, bringing the total number of members serving the Roosevelt Island community to seven.

Lydia Tang is a Math Instructor at CUNY Guttman Community College. Her professional background is in undergraduate math education and Wall Street risk analysis. She is currently exploring a business venture as an attempt to engage children in math to help them avoid math anxiety.

Dr. Michal L. Melamed is a Professor of Medicine (Nephrology), Pediatrics and Epidemiology & Population Health at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx. She is a board-certified nephrologist and internal medicine physician who specializes in treating patients with chronic kidney disease. She is also an NIH-funded researcher and director of several research training programs. She has lived on Roosevelt Island since the 1980's and is currently raising her two children in Rivercross.

Ben Fhala brings over 20 years of leadership experience in leading technical creative teams and consulting for Fortune 500 companies and global agencies. In 2021, Ben took on the role of Executive Vice President at RIDA (Roosevelt Island Disability Association), where during his tenure he successfully increased the group's funding, coordinated multiple cultural events specifically tailored for the disabled community, and played a vital role, under the leadership of Wendy Hirsh, in addressing the needs of the local Food Pantry that serves our communities. Ben's unwavering commitment to the residents of Roosevelt Island and the community's future has been a driving force behind his nomination to the RIOC Board. He brings a wealth of knowledge, a passion for innovation, and a deep understanding of community service to his new role.



“On behalf of the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation, it is my great pleasure to welcome Michal, Ben, and Lydia to the RIOC Board of Directors,” said RIOC President and CEO Shelton Haynes. “All three have already distinguished themselves as passionate advocates for Roosevelt Island and its residents, and I look forward to working closely with them to continue the mission of making the island the best it can possibly be for all.”

A SPECIAL MESSAGE to the RIOC Team From President Haynes

Though I've already shared these sentiments with the RIOC Team internally, I just want to take a moment here to publicly thank every worker in the Corporation for their dedication, focus, and commitment to our shared work. It feels like it's been non-stop for us since the spring, with community events, engagement meetings, grand openings, and that's on top of the normal day-to-day operations that take an enormous amount of effort just on their own. Our corporation has continued to execute at a high level, day in and day out, led by our outstanding Executive Team. I know each of our extraordinary departments are working tirelessly, and we have much to be proud of. Sportspark has blown past initial membership estimates, a testament to the beautiful facility itself and its leadership team; we're seeing tangible decreases in our already low-crime statistics following the unveiling of the 10-Point Public Safety Plan; the island continues to look beautiful and operate smoothly, which speaks to how well our Operations, Horticulture and Grounds, Maintenance, and Transportation teams are doing; the Youth Center continues to serve as a shining beacon of hope for island families; Our often unsung Legal, Finance, and IT Departments are doing outstanding work behind the scenes; and our new Constituent Services Department is off to a fast start, which all speaks to the fine job our HR Team does in finding the right people to fill our ranks. In reflecting on all of that, I can't help but feel extremely grateful for you all.

So, once again:

Thank you.

- Shelton



RIOC REMINDER

Report Problems Online Using the Tikkit System

Since launching our Constituent Services Department in May, we've been surprised to find that many island residents were unaware they could already report their problems to RIOC through our website (www.rioc.ny.gov) using the online Tikkit system.

The Tikkit system has been in place since 2019 and allows island residents to submit concerns or complaints directly to RIOC, which are then evaluated and sent to the proper department within the corporation to be addressed. Once an issue is logged into the Tikkit system, the user can track RIOC's progress on the problem via automatic notifications. The Tikkit system is also an incredibly helpful tool for the RIOC team. Different departments can easily track their work through the system, and by having residents submit detailed reports in real time, our teams are able to respond to issues at a much faster pace.

Submitting a Tikkit to RIOC is easy. Below you will find a step-by-step guide to help you get started:

1. Go to the RIOC website, rioc.ny.gov or simply visit <https://rioc.tikkit.us/>
2. Once on the RIOC website homepage, click the "Report a Problem" button in the row of icons below the photo carousel
3. Enter your email address to set-up an account and hit submit
4. Check your inbox for a verification email and click the link inside to login
5. Once you're logged in, you can submit a request! Click the "File a new request" button
6. Fill out all the pertinent fields of information
7. Click "submit request"

If you have an issue that you want to bring to our immediate attention but don't have time to schedule a Constituent Services appointment, please consider utilizing the Tikkit system!

YOUTH CENTER HIGHLIGHTS



SUMMER CARNIVAL

On July 13th, the Roosevelt Island Youth Center's Summer Camp hosted a special carnival for camp attendees, complete with games, prizes, and even a bouncy castle inside the actual Youth Center!



BEACH DAY ON MEDITATION LAWN

The Youth Center Summer Camp brought the beach to Meditation Lawn on July 28th with their "Summer Beach Day" for island campers! There were pools, slip-n-slides, an arts and crafts rock painting station; everyone had a blast!

ROOSEVELT ISLAND
OPERATING CORPORATION
SHELTON J. HAYNES
President & CEO

Roosevelt Island Youth Center

Teen Night Program

FREE
AGES 13-19
*EXCLUSIVE FOR RESIDENTS

AUGUST 10TH - 25TH
THURSDAY-FRIDAY, 6-8PM

PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Music Studio	Special Events	Teen Workshops
Dance	Job Readiness	Photography
Basketball	Podcast	Rec Room

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Youth Center Launches Evening Teen Programming

In the Corporation's ongoing effort to expand positive programming for island teens, the Roosevelt Island Youth Center recently launched a new Teen Night Program that runs every Thursday and Friday from August 10th to the 25th. The Center is proud to offer this diverse array of specialty programming, ranging from music and podcast production in the center's new studio, basketball, dance, photography, job readiness and much more!

